

c o n t e n t s

THIS
HERE OMEN
WAS MADE IN
NEW YORK
CITY!

NEW YORK
CITY??!!!!

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THE OMEN

15th Anniversary Special

Michael Benni Pierce	Jackoff
Jacob Chabot	Jackball
Tyler Carey	Jacqueoff
Mark Hugo	Jagoff
Gabriel Mckee	Jagball
Gwynne Watkins	Jackjack
Wade Stuckwisch	Jagjack
Alli Hartley	Balljack
Michael Zole	Balloff
J Wilder Konschak	Ballball
Karl Moore	Numbnuts
Zak Kauffman	Jerkoff
Justin Philpot	Jerkball
Michelle Dale	Jerkjack
Travis Dale	Jerkjerk
Christine Fernsebner Eslao	Jerkstore
Abby Ohlheimer	Jerkbag
Shaun Boyle	Jackbag
Rebecca Costello	Jagass
Dorian Gittleman	Dickball
Beth Day	Jackjerkjagassballkick

Cover by Jacob Chabot

POLICY BOX!

The Omen accepts submissions from any member of the Hampshire community. We will not edit anything you write, as long as you are willing to stand by whatever you said. Libel, which we personally find amusing and entertaining for countless hours is not okay in this forum and will not be printed. Submissions, which includes anything from news, commentary, fiction, comics, satire, art, first born, bad poetry, bulletins, questions, and anything else you can think of and your beloved community rag will dish it back tenfold. To submit, send it to someone who's actually in charge of this damn thing. Or something like that. We're just a bunch of old out-of-touch alums who couldn't tell FPH from a hole in the ground anymore. Do people still play Quake?

<http://omen.hampshire.edu/>

The Worst Omen Editor-In-Chiefs Ever

1. Stephanie Cole
2. Jon Land
3. Jordan Strauss
4. Michelle Beach
5. Jacob Chabot
6. Michael "Benni" Pierce
7. Jason "Wilder" Konschak
8. Justin Philpot
9. Jeffrey Paternostro
10. Abby Ohlheimer
11. Lindsay Barbieri

GUUUYS,
I'M THE
WIZARD!



15 YEARS LATER...



The concept of time is one that truly fascinates me. If we don't think about it, it doesn't seem to affect us. But if we attempt to understand it by measuring and analyzing it, we realize that it simply doesn't exist. We've given a name to something we sense the passing of, but have no ability to change or alter in our lifetimes.

With *The Omen's* 15 Year Anniversary looming, I began to be haunted by illusions of the passage of time. Has it really been fifteen long years since the inception of *The Omen*?

Wait, let's think about this. As of April of 2008, I've been alive for roughly 10,134 days. I started going to Hampshire back in '98. At that time, World War II had officially been over for about 53 years (give or take a couple months) and it had been 31 years since the original series of *Star Trek* appeared on broadcast television. Take into account that at that moment, the Civil War had ended just over 100 years before. Only 100 years since a moment that literally defined our country.

Twenty years later, the Enterprise returned with *Star*

Trek: The Next Generation. But the world had changed. Someone mentioned to me the other day that twenty years is now considered "retro." Twenty years ago, I was 7, enjoying the remainder of the first season of what could best be described as a B-movie science fiction series. And I loved it.

At that time, I could never imagine the life ahead of me. Twenty years, my GOD! That was an eternity away. But as I sit here and consider the next twenty years, it seems like it'll be over before I know it.

Paul McCartney is 66 years old. When he wrote "When I'm 64," did it really occur to him that he'd surpass that age 40 years later? Or was he simply watching the first season of *Star Trek* with the rest of the world as the Vietnam War raged on?

My Div 3 was called *It's About Time* and one of my favorite albums of all time contains a song called "Time". It was written then, "The sun is the same in a relative way, but you're older / Shorter of breath and one day closer to death." Cell phones, watches, computers, clocks—all telling us of our looming doom.

Data once observed that the pot he was watching boiled at precisely the same moment every time, but it wasn't until Riker urged him to turn off his internal chronometer that he was truly able to understand the phrase "A watched pot never boils."

But we can't just turn off our internal chronometers. We'd be late for work, for play, for church, for more and more. Time controls us and our actions, and yet it doesn't exist!

Though maybe it does, for time is also a benchmark for pride. Couples married for 50 years are revered for their perseverance and love. The longer that guy spins those plates or those people ballroom dance, the greater the prize!

For *The Omen*, 15 years is a sign of things to come, NOT the beginning of the end. It will go on as long as there are pissed off students and people with half a brain to put pencil to paper. Humans may only live an average of 82 years, but believe it or not, *The Omen* will continue beyond us all.

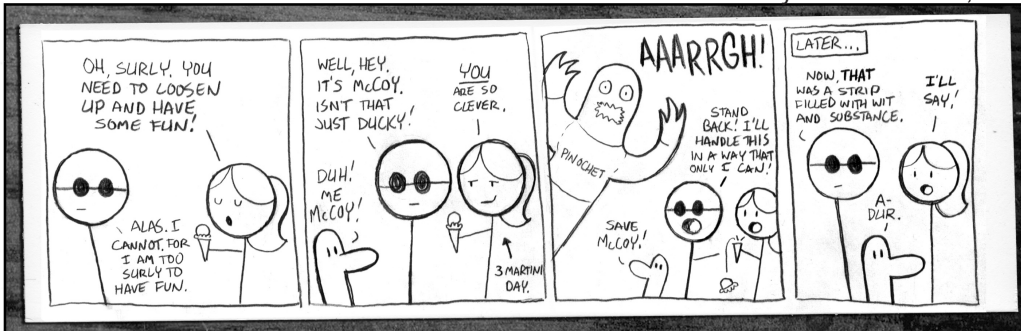
Oh fuck.

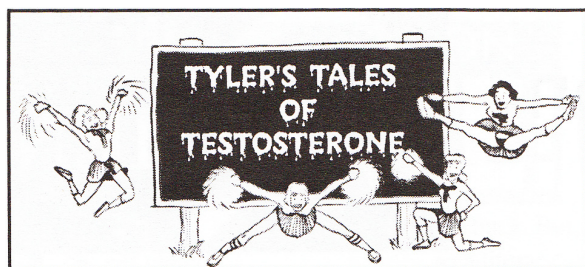


THE AMAZING LOST EPISODE OF SURLY BOY

By Jacob Chabot, F96

IN ORGANIZING THE SURLY BOY ARCHIVES, THIS "LOST" STRIP WAS DISCOVERED. THIS SKETCH WAS, FOR SOME STRANGE REASON, NEVER FINALIZED IN STRIP FORM. TODAY, THIS PLAINLY BRILLIANT "LOST" STRIP HAS BEEN RESTORED AND PRESENTED TO YOU BY THE SURLY BOY PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF AMERICA. ENJOY.





WORRYING ABOUT WHAT EVERYONE ELSE THINKS

T Tyler's Tales of Testosterone: The Court of Public Opinion ... Gullibility of Our Peers ... Called on the Carpet over the Legitimacy of *The Omen* as Publication ... Animal House ... Rage Rage Against the Dying of the Light

It seems fitting that nearly 10 years after my last Omen column that once again I start my writing with worry of a looming, no actually passed, deadline. The editors are once again in a position to be disappointed with me, but I'll try not to fulfill that expectation.

In the heyday of my writing for *The Omen*, my column "Tyler's Tales of Testosterone" was a forum for me to share mostly falsified stories of my and my friends' hopeless quests for companionship in the Pioneer Valley, with my voice thoroughly channeling/ripping off Dr. Hunter S. Thompson. Highlights included a group of literati Hampshire kids looking at a football tailgate party through their far too high-minded glasses, and an Animal House-inspired romp at an area women's college, with full Keystone Cops routine of my friends being chased out of a dormitory by campus security after a failed panty raid. It is no wonder that these clippings failed to land

me the career in journalism that was my fleeting fancy upon graduation in 1999. Worry not, folks, a life in the dot.com world was beckoning and promising riches in that year of our Lord, and how could I lose with that?

The amusing thing is that despite the obvious absurdity of the stories in my column, many of my fellow Hampsters took the tales at face value as if the column was a legitimate documentation of my life's events. I recall a party I was at in Dakin, where a girl I had just met told me that she had been warned to stay away from me and one of my friends by one of her orientation leaders, because of the events that were cited in the stories in *The Omen*. She and I had a good laugh over that—as if Bill Murray's friends would be warned that he was a womanizer based on roles he played in Ivan Reitman movies. There was a life lesson for me there though, one I've taken with me since my Hampshire days. If there's an opportunity for someone to believe something horrid based on rumor, insinuation or a joke, they will. Take the death of Heath Ledger recently. He died of an OD. Plain and simple. But as soon as it surfaced that his masseuse had called one of the Olsen twins immediately

after he was found, the court of public opinion turned the little Olsen ingénue into Sid Vicious (to Heath Ledger's Nancy Spungen).

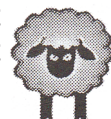
I wonder if these trends hold true for my current endeavor — The Great Hoboes of New York (www.greathoboes.com). Starting in the Summer of 2002, a number of *Omen* alumni — Joe Bakanauskas, Jacob Chabot, Stephan Edel, Gareth Edel, Jymm Gifford, Mark Hugo, Zak Kaufman, Felix Roy Mariposa, Karl Moore, Justin Philpot, Arthur Perez, Benni Pierce, Wade Stuckwisch, Rosie Valdez and Gwynne Watkins — started posting to a website that was hobbled together by yours truly to serve as a portfolio site for the writings, musings, illustrations, and rantings of our gang. Chief amongst the pieces that I wonder about rearing their heads are Wade Stuckwisch's in the trenches Howard-Beal-esque "I'm mad as hell, and I'm not going to take this anymore!" rants about the industry in Hollywood, and Mark Hugo's failed bids for the Governor of NY and even the presidency. I wonder if at some point during an interview at a major studio, years from now, someone's going to say, "Mr. Stuckwisch, is it true that you didn't care much for *Mission: Impossible III* or *The Da Vinci*

Code? I'm not sure we can work with someone of your questionable standards..." Or in Mark's case, "I understand you ran for office several times in campaigns that involved summoning the Old God Cthulhu, and using prostitutes to help with publicity?" My own brother was brought on the carpet about postings that he made to the site, by a boss who said he should be focusing his efforts on industry publications, instead of a silly website.

So, I guess it's a sense of conflict that strikes me – do we bear responsibility for our musings in *The Omen*, on our websites, on our blogs, and our MySpace pages, or should

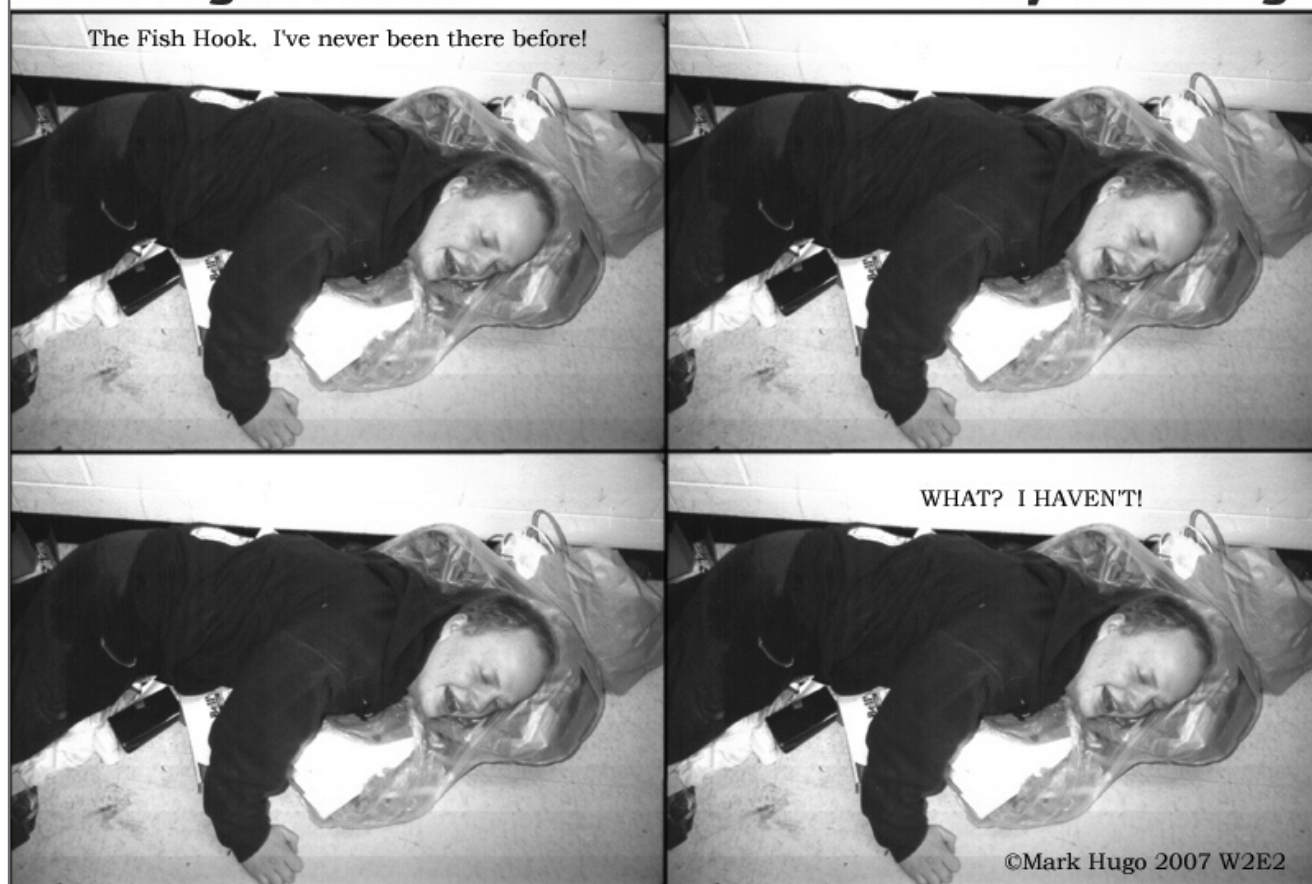
artistic musings be considered off limits for judgment by our peers, co-workers, bosses, and strangers? It's this strange sense of growing up in public that is very different, even now, less than 10 years after I wrote those silly anecdotes in *The Omen* that now exist in the ether for all to see. By no means can we consider any of that content to be private or something that only our trusted friends will read, but should we be paranoid about what all the others out there think when reading our thoughts and musings? It's tougher to be a writer of any sort—author, commentator, prophet—in these days where our writings

often make it to the media without the revisions and rewrites that would have been required before "publication" in the past. So, how to handle the chance of instantaneous review and response? How do you react to those peers who critique the quality of your pieces before the e-ink is even dry, like we do this just for their validation? Or those bosses who ask you if you're really spending your time appropriately in such forays? Ah, screw 'em if they can't take a joke. Do not dare go gentle into that good internet! Everybody's a critic. All I know is that I got a panty raid I've got to get to...



Wade-ing To Exhale

by mark hugo



J'accuse!



RIME OF THE ANCIENT LOSER

Dear Hampshire,

I have an apology to make. I've been thinking a lot lately about how I behaved while at Hampshire, and I've realized, with a growing sense of regret, that one particular aspect of my behavior may have hurt some individuals, and may even have a lasting negative aspect on the environment of the school in general. I feel just awful about it, and I want to make amends. So, Hampshire College, here is my apology:

I'm sorry I didn't listen to more Iron Maiden.

While writing for *The Omen*, I penned articles on Eazy-E and Taoism, the general silliness of the Maoist newspaper MIM notes (do they still have that?), and even a long fiction piece detailing a Poison fan's descent

into madness. (Oh, plus that weird drawing of me with the severed head of Uncle Joey from "Full House" in the background. Yeah, that was weird.) What mirth did I prevent by not writing an essay on "Powerslave?" How many hallmates did I not awaken by blasting "The Trooper" before leaving for that Mount Holyoke class that started at ass o'clock in the morning on Wednesdays? How many people did I fail to irritate by not singing "Quest For Fire" at the top of my lungs during late-night fire alarms? (That one's awesome—it starts with the line "In a time when dinosaurs walked the earth." Every song should start this way.)

The worst part of the whole thing is that I tried. During my second year, I borrowed Seventh Son of a Seventh Son from this guy Roger—you may remember

him as the guy who started eating macrobiotically or something and ended up weighing like 73 pounds. Anyway, I listened to it a couple times, but for some reason I couldn't get into it. I honestly don't know why I wasn't immediately swept away by the wonder of "The Evil That Men Do" or, dear God, that amazing title track.

It's only in the last year or so that I've realized my oversight, and only very recently that I've begun to consider the extensive damage my negligence may have caused to Hampshire's culture. I feel just plain awful, Hampshire; I'm all broken up about it. I really wish I'd been able to be there for you, that I'd been able to support your need for more Maiden. Can you forgive me?

I'm glad to have this off my chest, Hampshire. I know we've got a long road of healing ahead, and I hope I can make it up to you somehow. It begins here, Hampshire: tonight, before you go to sleep, listen to "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" and think of me.

Love,

Gabriel

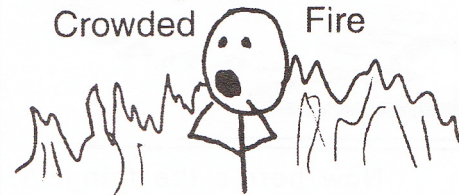
P.S. Sorry, Justin. I have no regrets about not loving AC/DC.



Best. Hampshire. Halloween. Ever.

ONE DECADE, 40 MINUTES

Shouting Theatre in a
Crowded Fire



Okay, before we go any further, let's get one thing straight: *The Omen* article I intended to write is a masterpiece of humor, insight and nostalgia. It starts in classic "it's funny 'cause it's true!" form, talking about my crazy time at Hampshire, bridging the gap between my experience ten years ago and yours today. It then goes on to weightier topics, discussing the significance of *The Omen*, to me, to the college, to the world. Next it morphs into a love story, in which a fellow editor and I spend many countless nights in the pub lab, eating cold pizza and inventing awful puns, never suspecting we'll be married in three years. Finally this article moves into the present, tying it all together by describing my current life as a writer and editor, all the while showcasing the talents I acquired working at—that's right—*The Omen*.

Of course, that article is not the one you're reading. That article would have required a few hours, a lot of reflection, perhaps a rewrite or two. This article is being written in a forty-minute window while my (former fellow *Omen* editor) husband Gabe is watching our three-week-old baby, after which our friend (and former fellow *Omen* editor) Travis is picking us up with his six-month-old baby, and we're

going to our friend (and former fellow *Omen* editor) Benni's apartment to lay out this issue.

The truth is, the article you're reading is more true-to-form than the one I intended to write. I wrote most of my *Omen* articles like this, in small windows of time, nose pressed up against the deadline, no idea what I'd say. The only rule for having a column in those days was that you'd have to keep writing it every week. So I'd write about the reality TV show that had been playing in my mod earlier, the music I was listening to that week, or some arbitrary list pulled from my head—i.e., the best and worst movie musicals, by decade. In more ambitious moments, I'd write about campus life; laying out the quirks of Division II, looking at campus architecture, or critiquing the student activists' more misguided protests. (I remember students once staging a protest of the trustees, on the grounds that the trustees had too much money and were therefore slaves to capitalism. But I digress.)

I don't know who, if anybody, read my articles. Still, we put out a new magazine every other week, and if you sent us something—anything!—we'd publish it. That was exciting then, before the explosion of personal blogs

and campus websites. And it's still exciting to me now, when my job involves rejecting dozens of submissions a week. A magazine that will publish every submission is a brave, honest, impossible thing. It brings out the worst in writers, and the best. When I look back at old issues of *The Omen* (my husband and I both saved them all—we recently got rid of our duplicates), I see a perfect chronicle of life at Hampshire, free-form and independent, timely and out-of-time, rude and reverent. It was sometimes awful, sometimes inspired, and always totally unique.

It's been ten years since I was a first-year student at Hampshire. Yet often my life now feels like a minor variation of my life then. Many of my friends in New York are Hampshire alumni. We're starting families and careers, but we're still riffing on the same themes: filmmaking, theater, art, education, journalism and theology. We put it all out there and risk rejection, because that's the way the world works. But we take comfort in knowing that, deep in the Pioneer Valley, there's still a magazine that would publish it all.

The editor in me wants to go back and revise the hell out of everything I just wrote. But my ride's here, and it's time to go.





YOU'RE ALL MORONS

By WADE STUCKWISCH, F96

When I was first to approach to write this article, I didn't see the point. To me, *The Omen* is a publication by and for the Hampshire College community, and as an alumnus, I failed to see what I could say to the current Hampshire student body that could possibly be relevant. In this day and age of Teh Interweb, publishing without fear of prior restraint is as common as the next loudmouthed, uninformed blogger. Plus, being a writer outside the current Hampshire community, I am not bound by the one restraint on *Omen* contributors—no one can walk up to me on campus and say, "Wade, my friend, I don't understand why you decided to begin your *Omen* article with that string of seventeen popular racial epithets, and as a person of sensitivity, I am somewhat offended," to which I might respond, "Perhaps you are right, personal friend of mine, and I regret somewhat that I used the Hampshire community as a petri dish for free speech." I suppose that, were I to attempt such a feat in this article, I might be held accountable by current or future employers, but I currently work as a set lighting technician and grip in LA, and, from my experience with my peers, there is nothing I could possibly pen in these pages that could endanger

my future employment. But I digress...

The last time I was tempted to submit to *The Omen* was way back in late 2001, when I penned an open letter to the folks who sponsored the "community referendum" condemning the war in Afghanistan, a "referendum" involving voting methods that would make Vladimir Putin blush. My favorite assertion from this asinine "community" statement was the blanket accusation that every American military action of the last 60 years has been motivated by racism. I'm sure the Serbs will be happy to learn that they are now officially "brown." Unfortunately, my writing fell in between semesters, and the issue had turned to vinegar by the time *Omen* publication resumed. I also had trouble trimming my commentary to less than four pages, as I was particularly impassioned about the issue—after all, it's not every day that two buildings across the street from your workplace get knocked down by planes while you are standing less than 100 yards away. But that's neither here nor there—time heals all wounds, right?

However, much like a Tennessee whiskey that has been filtered through charred sugar maple, I have mellowed since my Hampshire years.

Questions regarding the extent and the importance of campus free speech have taken a back seat to questions like, "Was it really worth making everyone at Hampshire so angry?" In the crucible of higher education, it's easy for academic issues like race, class, gender, free speech, hegemony, materialist dialectic, etc., etc., to outdistance issues like neighborly respect and genteel courtesy. Then again, isn't it the duty of an academic institution to foster debate? It would be truly shameful if Hampshire became a place for rote book learning and unquestioning acceptance of academic theory just for the sake of maintaining a peaceful community.

To me, this is the ultimate irony of *The Omen*: if you hate it, why not just ignore it? Why not accept that your friends and neighbors disagree with you? Perhaps it is because *The Omen* is a product of the Hampshire community—a small and culturally isolated community—that *The Omen* somehow becomes a social blight that offends people's notions of self and collective responsibility.

For all the lip service Left-leaning types pay to diversity, it's amazing how intolerant we (and people in general, for that matter) are to opinions

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THE YOUNG AND THE BEAUTIFUL

I sit here in my luxurious two-bedroom apartment in sunny California, stroking my newly-groomed puppy and watching cable on my multiple-inch screen TV. I flip through over 300 channels and I consider the question put to me: What advice can I give you, the children of the future?

I, a woman who has spent time on the Fox, Paramount, and WB lots. I, who had once had Ron Livingston open the door for me. I, who calmly smoked while I stood across the balcony from Keanu Reeves.

I know you can only dare to hope to have such a life as mine, so speckled with stars of stage and screen. I know you dream of staring into the eyes of a smiling Jessica Biel as you confidently hand back her newly validated parking ticket. There is trust in those eyes. There is love.

Everyone's success story is unique, and I'm sure your hard work and perseverance will put you too within spitting distance of Dakota Fanning, as your roommate waits to interview with her agent.

The best advice that I can

give to you is this: There are those out there, your friends, lovers even, who will resent your success. Who will question your friendship with your glittering celebrities. Try to be kind to them. They are remnants of your old life. They were made to resent you, as a spent chrysalis would resent a butterfly.

When you shed them, as I have shed them, they will realize, soon enough, that you were made for better things.

And when Brad Pitt calls, together, we will make them pay.



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that we don't agree with. The myth spanning the liberal/conservative divide is that the other side is either uninformed, naïve or immoral. The watchword remains tolerance, but the goal remains an eventual purge of the perceived misinformation that drives the other side of the dialectic. And of course, since we all know that deep down we are the ones who are right, we know that the greater good is on our side. After all, we've been to college and we've read big fancy books—we couldn't possibly be mistaken about anything.

Which brings me back to my original point: you people don't know shit.

It's a sad irony of our educational system that university education is meant to prepare students to pursue their life's work, yet the vast majority of college students have never actually had to survive on their own prior to entering college. Today's universities are summer

camp for the middle and upper classes—party and do all the drugs you want, you'll never be held accountable for any of your actions and there's no need for you to bring home a paycheck. (For those of you from privileged backgrounds, I may have just described your post-collegiate life as well, so I apologize for the narrowness of my working class viewpoint.) It's that lack of context that probably explains why Hampshire has a tendency to occasionally become something akin to the Stanford Prison Experiment with drum circles.

So, as an alumni, I feel that the best thing I could probably offer is perspective. So here's a list of everything you need to know to understand the world:

- Morons rule, and what you know doesn't count for shit.
- A principled intellectual will always be trumped by a ruthless idiot.
- A well-packaged lie is

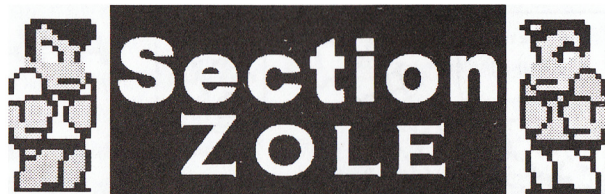
infinitely more believable than the truth.

- If you want something, you will have to fight somebody else for it. A pacifist in a snowball fight is a joyless jerk-off covered in snow. (Side note: Tibet will never be free so shut up already.)

- People who do bad things always have good intentions.

So I guess what I'm saying is that the two people you can learn the most from in life are Thomas Hobbes and Tony Montana. You can argue whether that makes me a good, right-thinking liberal like you or an evil, ignorant conservative like Them, but before you pass your final judgment, I refer you back to List Item Number One. So enjoy your parties and free food, and have fun soaking up all that totally excellent and useful book-learnin' that you're doing, because in the immortal words of Denis Leary, life's going to suck when you grow up.





CHECK, ONE, TWO...

BY MICHAEL ZOLE, F99

[The following is a transcript of Michael Zole's address to the Omen 15th Anniversary Reunion.]

Ladies and gentlemen of *The Omen*: Today, I—

Hi. Yes, thank you. I love you, too. Yeah, hello.

Okay, people. I'm going to be available to autograph things after this, so if you could please let me finish my speech, that would be great.

Jesus.

Anyway, it's been a while. Five years ago, I graduated from Hampshire College with nothing more than \$500, a questionable education, and a set of parents who would tolerate me hanging around in their house playing *Grand Theft Auto 3* for a few months. Today, I stand before you a nearly functional human being.

It sounds glamorous, but it wasn't easy to get to where I am. I had to struggle. I had to work, often with other people. And that brings me to the question I pose to you, and to any Hampshire-afflicted person I cross paths with: what the *fuck* is up with other people?

They're nice enough, these people who didn't go to Hampshire. They have careers, and hobbies, and

they don't reek of patchouli. They use the Internet, like you and me. On paper, I can't think of any way in which they and I differ.

But there's something off about them, something cultural. If the world was the *Harry Potter* series, these people are the ones who read *Sorcerer's Stone*. We, on the other hand, read all the books, most of the fan fiction, and even some of the slash fiction where Harry fucks Ron using magical lube. Not that this necessarily makes us better, of course; slash fiction, once read, cannot be unread. But it's hard to really connect with someone knowing that you could probably write a 20-page paper on the racial issues raised by a single episode of *Chappelle's Show*, and their engagement starts and ends with the phrase "I'm Rick James, bitch".

This really hit me when I was at a normal-people party recently. Now, when you or I get together, we certainly know how to have a good time. We break out the Guitar Hero, or more recently the Rock Band. We go out to eat. We talk about what's going on with other alums, especially the ones we keep up on even though they annoy the shit out of us. I guess what I'm trying to say is that we interact with each other.

But then there's the party I was at, which seemed to be 90 to 95% about drinking beer. It wasn't even like a frat party or anything, where the beer is the cheapest possible beer and everyone's wearing ratty T-shirts. People were dressed up fairly nice. And they were talking to each other, but—and here's the key—they weren't really conveying any thoughts. At one point, a guy took a break from hitting on my girlfriend to ask why I wasn't holding a drink. Think about that for a second: he didn't know whether I'd already had a drink that night, or whether I was merely between drinks; he only knew that I wasn't drinking *that second*, and that by itself was apparently an aberration.

Not that Hampshire students are strangers to drinking. But we tend to be pretentious about it, and have elaborate conversations when getting smashed. Again, I'm not glorifying this. As a nondrinker, it's not fun to sit around and listen to how many people everyone else has hooked up with.

Despite my denials, maybe this comes across as elitism, and there's probably some of that. But I generally think of myself as the weirdo when in mixed company. And this phenomenon isn't even a Hampshire-specific thing, as

students from Bard and Oberlin and Evergreen State can tell you. There's a kinship there. Hampshire just calibrates your expectations in a certain way, and that's especially true for those of us who wrote for *The Omen*.

See, the flipside of the elitism is that when I was actually a student at Hampshire, I didn't really get along with everyone. As much as I appreciate the passion and giving-a-shit-itude that every Hampshire student brings, I could do without the strident humorlessness, and there was a lot of that during my tenure. So I basically hung out with a subset of the student body, maybe a hundred people

or so, and it was people in this group that produced most of the material in *The Omen*. When I tell people about it now, I say that I wrote for the school paper. The reality is that I and a dozen other people spent every other Saturday night laying out people's weirdball rants in a tiny office plastered with LaserJet printouts of Internet porn. The rest of the campus didn't understand then, and the rest of the world wouldn't understand now.

The thing about the porn in the office doesn't look good on a résumé, by the way.

Because of all this, sometimes I feel like a man without a

country. But it's not really so bad. I know my people are out there. Not only are they out there, they're really kicking ass at what they do. And on a campus with few traditions and fewer students willing to work on something they didn't create, we've all taken part in a 15-year legacy. That's pretty fucking crazy. All I really did was write about video games.

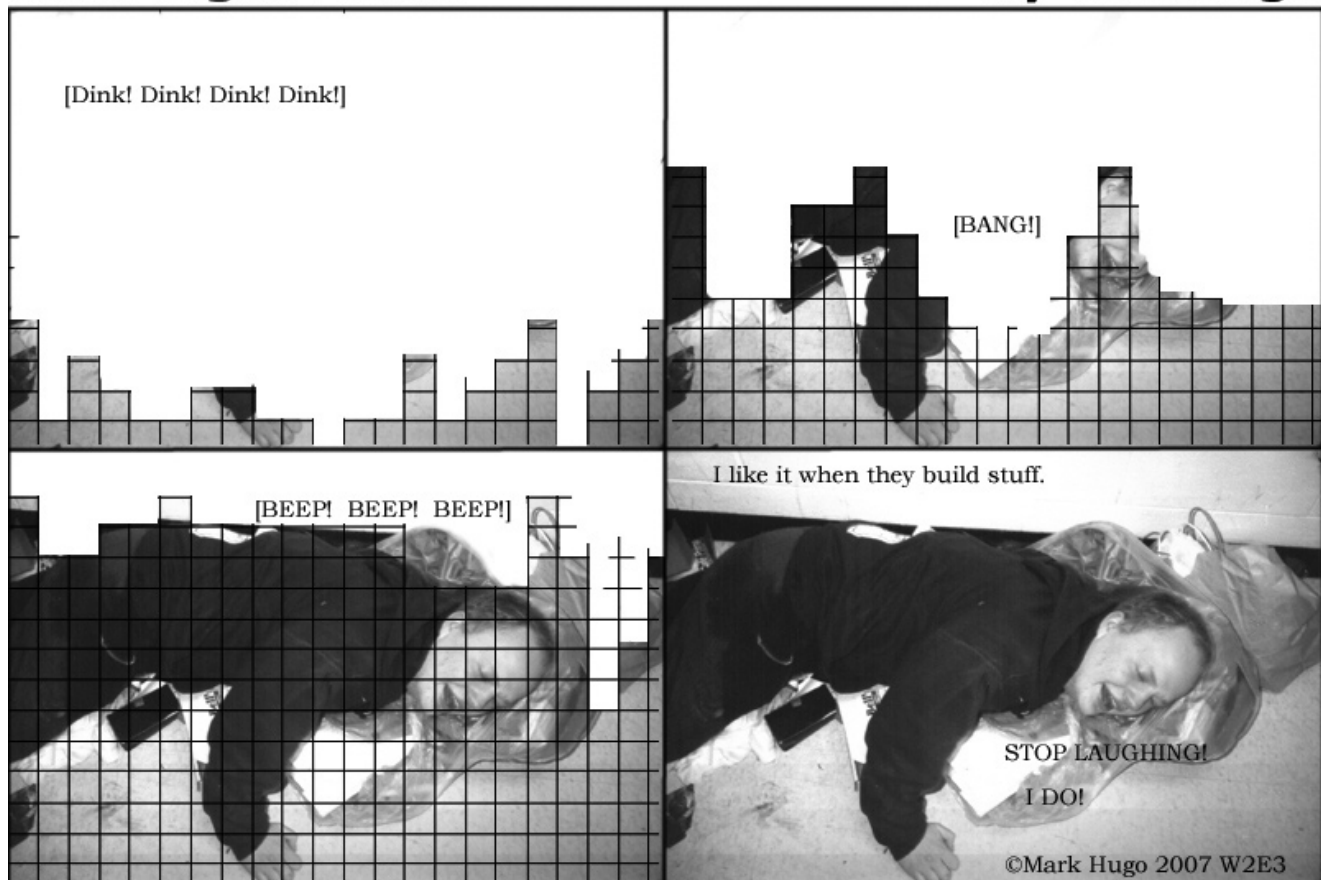
So happy birthday, *Omen*. You may just be turning 15, but you've always been surly and countercultural. Michael Zole out.

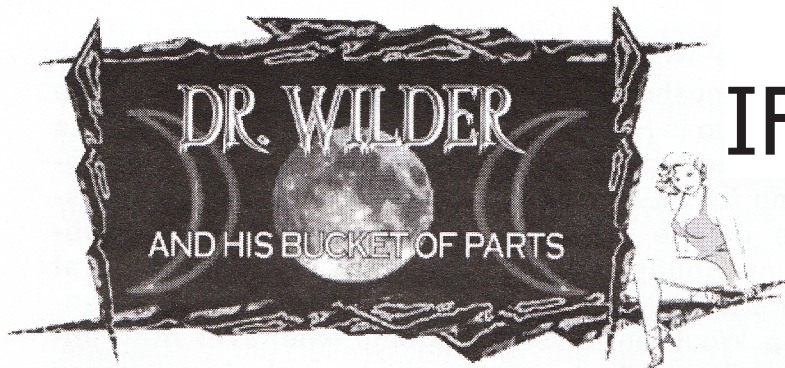
[Exit to thunderous applause.]



Wade-ing To Exhale

by mark hugo





IF I'D'a KNOWN THEN...

By J WILDER KONSCHAK, F98

It is hard, here at the age of almost thirty, to recall those beloved salad days back at Camp Hamp. No, no—it isn't emotionally hard. It's not hard on my heart. No, no—I'm afraid it's actually hard to do. It's hard on my brain. This may be my advancing senility. This may be due to the distracting ticking-sound that I hear all the live-long day. But, one thing is for certain, it is almost certainly because of my tumor.

Though—what can't I blame on that scamp—my tumor? I have blamed it for my impotence. I have blamed it for the complete lack of love in my life. I have blamed it for my failure to acquire a shred of material wealth. That's my tumor. It is, in every sense of the word, a malignant one.

So you see, my dear

Hampshire student, there is more than just time dividing you and me. There's a tumor. And there's also *experience*. There's a hearty helping of hard-earned *wisdom*. If I'd'a known then... what I know now... When I was your age... if I'd'a had access to the counsel of an older person, the wisdom of a complete stranger, the insights of a loser so empty that he'd reach out in writing to 19-year-olds with bitter, self-pity jokes... Shit! That would've been something, huh?

Unfortunately, I have only this advice to bestow upon you: you're going to get cancer. Better make peace with the idea. Hunker down and decide how you're going to deal with it. The minute you graduate, the clock starts ticking. The cancer

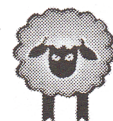
clock. The clock that rings when you get cancer.

And then, of course, when you actually get cancer, it's only a snooze button. A snooze button providing a short pause before you get some more cancer.

Take my word for it. If you can, get yourself some brain cancer. It's like a roly-coaster. Nausea, vomiting, and it's over quick.

Because the fact of the matter is, life in the big, bad world is just a game of musical chairs. One where the chairs are cancer, and the poor jerk who fails to get a chair is dead. And the music is also cancer.

Face it, in the game of musical chairs, there is very little that isn't a metaphor for the heaps of cancer that you're about to get.



UNTITLED

Shaun sucks.



By KARL MOORE, F99

THE IMPORTANCE OF BOAT OWNERSHIP



By ZAK KAUFFMAN, F99

Success in life means different things for different people. Some people define success in terms of career, some in terms of family, some in terms of plain old happiness. They're all completely wrong. In my 84 years on this planet I've discovered that the only thing that matters worth a damn, that really says "I'm here God, I'm living life and loving it all no matter what you send my way", is boat ownership.

An adult who does not own a boat is not really a person. They may think they are, but underneath their naive eyes is a black emptiness that knows nothing of life. Boat ownership makes a person real, it defines the difference between a blip on a census survey and a human being.

Before owning a boat I thought I had a wonderful life. I was 34 years old and a successful architect. I was married to a woman I truly loved and had my first child on the way. I had friends, a rewarding relationship with Jesus, and a stunningly large penis. I was a millionaire. That was the year that I purchased my first boat, done on a lark to spice up a vacation. That was when I discovered that everything I loved was made of shit.

You see, a man without a boat is floating in life. He has no motor power, no

ability to move forward. He may be happy today, floating on gentle waters under a blue sky, but one day he will realize that he is drowning in an ocean of scum. He will find that the clear sea he once luxuriated in has turned black and thick and seeks to pull him down, to fill his cavities with its foulness. He will be pulled deep into the vile sea of life and he will choke on the thick putrid essence of his own rot until all that is human within him has drowned. He will not die, but will become one with the sea, the hateful evil sea, and the next man who drowns will find that the rot that fills him is made of all those who have come before.

Unless he has a boat.

Obviously a large vessel is the goal, something that really lets you fuck the sea. You'll want at least 500 cubic feet, a 90 knot motor, and a storage hold large enough to keep supplies for 3 months at a time. First-time human beings may have to settle for something smaller, a 4-passenger motor boat or a sailboat or even a canoe, but always remember that the universe hates an awakened boat owner and will try to destroy you, and the only defense you have is a powerful boat.

Once out at sea you'll understand the truth of what

I'm saying. It wasn't until I stood at the helm of my first boat, a modest little jet boat I named Rhonda (she was green), that I understood. I looked back at my life and what I saw horrified me. When I was done retching I saw the world for the first time as a human being, and god damn it, it was sweet.

Within two years my life was on track. I had made the down payments on a humongous boat, the Ocean Killer, and was moving forward through life under my own motor power. In the nearly fifty years since then I've owned many boats, each one a silent cry against the tyranny of the black and hateful sea, and I've lived each day to the fullest.

You may take my advice or you may not. Maybe your mind is focussed on succeeding at your career, at winning the heart of some lovely creature, or just enjoying each day God gives you. It's not your fault that you think you're alive, and I suppose the sea isn't big enough to fit everyone anyway. But years from now when the sea starts to turn a little dark, when the sweet water you drink begins to taste bitter, and you feel yourself sinking down into the blackness, remember one thing: Boat ownership.



NOT IN NON SATIS SCIRE

I have been wracking my brain trying to think of something to write. I'm not entirely sure why. Most of the things I ever wrote for *The Omen* were written during layout. Getting it done early is partly out of respect for those who will slaving over it, and partly because if I don't do it now the added stress come this weekend may cause a heart attack or a prolapsed rectum. I'm not saying which would be worse, necessarily, just that both are unwelcome results of a hectic schedule, poor eating habits and a genetic predisposition for organ failure. Anyway, here it is...

So *The Omen* is 15 years old. Big deal? Kind of. For a campus that has never been able to sustain a "true" newspaper, the longevity of *The Omen* is something worth paying attention to. Looking at *The Omen* as a community specific product probably says more about the people attracted to Hampshire than anything else, save the work produced by individual students. This is certainly the case when we take the checkered history of *The Omen* into account. The various controversies and debates that have concerned *The Omen* over the course of a decade and a half speak volumes about the composition and concerns of the community and changes in both over time. For better or worse, in many ways *The Omen* is Hampshire's publication of record. Unfortunately, it was often the cause, in one way or another, of much of the news it commented on.

This is the part I don't

understand. Even with all the controversy in *The Omen's* past, (as I understand it there hasn't been anything really bad since I was editor), Hampshire as an institution has been slow in recognizing the importance of *The Omen* to the community. "Omen kids" were generally (this may have changed – but I doubt it) considered cliquey and more than a little arrogant. Admittedly, some of the criticism was justified. Some of us reveled a little too much in being the center of so much negative attention. However justified we felt we were at the time, the attitude of some *Omen* members probably did more damage to the lasting image of the publication than any single event, at least during my involvement.

Still, *The Omen* deserves more recognition, and more credit, than it (and by extension its members) has received. Indeed, it is the human factor of *The Omen*, the 'hidden' element, which should be recognized the most. *The Omen* is grounded in the abstract, embodying a concept of collegiate publication unique to Hampshire. It's not unfair to say that the publication policy of *The Omen* is central not only to the identity of the publication itself, but to the people who have worked on it as well. There is something about the mission of *The Omen* that attracts certain kinds of people to participate in its creation and progression. I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize the successes of those who have worked on *The Omen*, both to link past members to present ones and to provide the community as

a whole the chance to see whom the "Omen kids" are, have been, and will be. This is us...

Justin Philpot F97 (F02), Music/Media Studies: Editor-in-Chief of *The Omen* from January '03 to December '03. Currently finishing his Masters degree in the Department of Popular Culture, Bowling Green State University. He is also trying to decide where to go for his Ph.D., Iowa or Bowling Green.

Shaun Boyle (F99): Shaun Boyle truly loves the Wii, in spite of all the mounting evidence why he shouldn't. Cooking Mama is just like cooking in real life! Excite Truck is just like driving a truck in real life! Wii sports is just like playing Wii sports in real life! He also has a dog.

Jacob Chabot (F96) is still alive.

Rebecca Costello (F00) is going to honor the spirit of Justin's article by not being a wise-ass like those two. After graduating, she served for a year in AmeriCorps as a maternal/child health educator and then sampled a variety of jobs, from substitute teacher, to community support worker for disabled individuals, to bra fitter. For the fall, she will begin a Master's in Public Health at Columbia University or Hunter College. She is a Certified Doula and Certified Breastfeeding Educator.

Michelle Dale (Beach) (F96) graduated from Teachers College, Columbia University with a Masters in Education and now

is an elementary school teacher in New York City, where she lives with her husband, Travis, and her six month old daughter, Myra.

Beth Day (F99) moved to Seattle after graduation, where she worked for a year in AmeriCorps doing reading support in low-income schools. She received a GK-12 Fellowship to attend Western Washington University for her master's degree in biology, then transferred to the University of Washington where she studied Wetland Science and Management. She currently works in a job where she gets to dig holes outside, and lives with her boyfriend Matthew in her favorite city in the world.

Travis Dale (F97) only regrets

that he didn't do more to prevent the Planet of the Apes.

Gabriel McKee (F97) graduated from Harvard Divinity School with a Master's degree in theological studies in 2003. His Div III, "Pink Beams of Light From the God in the Gutter: The Science Fictional Religion of Philip K. Dick" was published in 2004 by the University Press of America. His second book, "The Gospel According to Science Fiction", was published in 2007 by Westminster John Knox. He continues to write at sfgospel.com. He is currently pursuing a master's degree in library and information science at Long Island University and working in NYU's Bobst Library. He and his wife Gwynne (see below) had a son Anselm on March 3rd 2008.

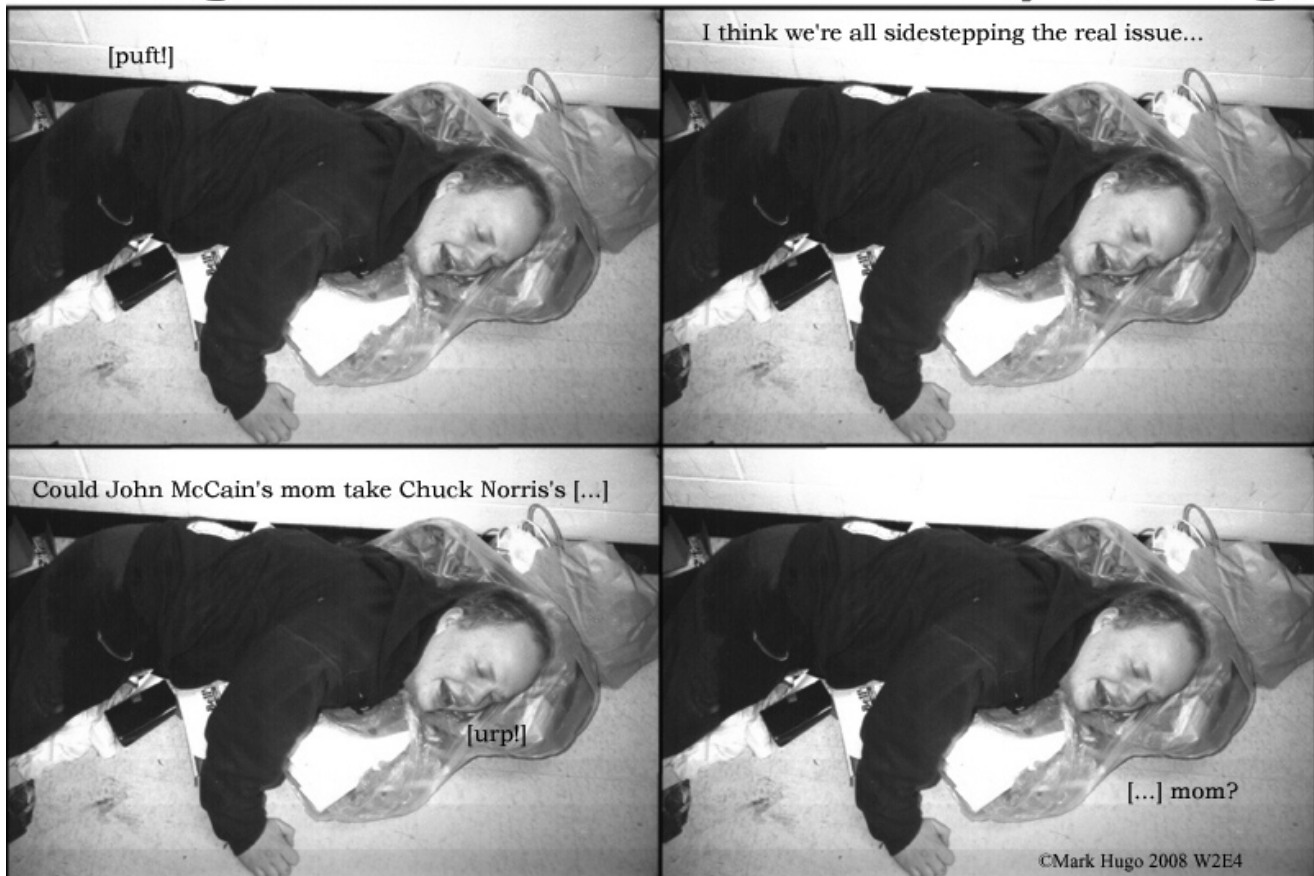
Gwynne Watkins (F98) wrote a musical about the Virgin Mary for her Div III. She has since spent a few years at the BMI Musical Theater Writers Workshop, written plays about space pirates and Wonder Woman, and started a blog about religion and culture at Godspam.net. Her day job involves editing the parenting site Babble.com and contributing pop culture articles to Nerve.com. She lives in Brooklyn with Gabe (see above), their brand-new son, and a large collection of DVDs.

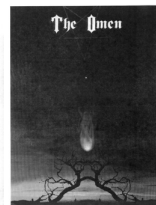
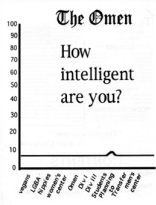
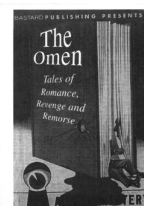
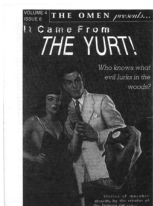
Michael Benni Pierce (F98) is working as an Interactive Producer in New York City for Fountainhead Films while also supporting Misplaced Planet Productions hoping to one day strike it big.



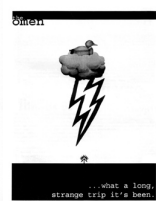
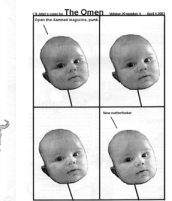
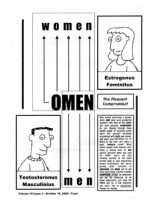
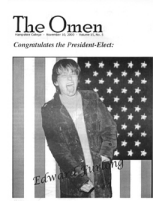
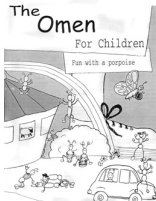
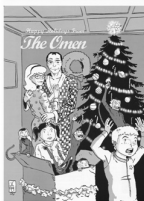
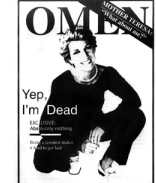
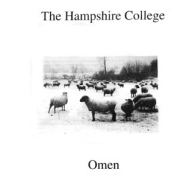
Wade-ing To Exhale

by mark hugo





the omen





SEX ADVICE LOST IN TRANSLATION

Dear SALIT,

My boyfriend wants me to place my finger into his ass thus far I I blow it. Does make this middle, is which it gay?

Signed,

Finger Is Brown And Numb

Dear FIBAN,

Although it is true that the homosexual men appreciate anal stimulation much right men also appreciate the "play of end". I always found the term "play end" to amuse because that resembles game which you would play by using your end. It would be as failures provide that you must move your pieces by seizing them between your cheeks of ass and all the places are brown. Was it last too remote part? Thus you do not worry, FIBAN, it wants your finger to the top of its ass not its best elegant bud. Advance thus and obtain with that pinky stinky!

Dear SALIT,

My boyfriend an extremely small penis has. Recommend any positions which would help with this problem could you?

Signed,

Needs Alot Deeper Sinking of Deep Dicking

Dear Nads Odd (I'll forgive the misspelling of "a lot" because I love puns),

Beside the position of omhoog of and going away the door is the best positions probable style Doggy. The Snake, the Ears of the Rabbit and v-Vorming are also good bets. I knew not even these positions nice names had. If you want further information consult your local Google. But make themselves odd no Nads worried, the size everything and all that is not. Tell your partner what you want and perhaps you getting. Only do not speak concerning this whereas eating few Gerkins preserves.

Dear SALIT,

I would not like to be prude, but, every time my friend comes, if I go down on her, drowns her me nearly. I heard of squirters, before however this is ridiculous. How much is too much?

Signed,

Drowning in My Girl Aquatic Gushings

Dear Dim Gag,

There is no reason to be afraid one squishy Pussy. Much the girl in embarrassment are brought, in order to be active excessive-involved. Like the pathfinders say you fair necessity to be prepared. Have a cloth, which is, to wipe your lips and its lips off handily. Remember to surely always be. If you carry contacts, a pair Swimschutzbrillen is an affordable insurance policy against accident. Each Vagina is a singular flower and the same is applicable for the quantity of the water, which they must flower. I legend, all taking part welcome!

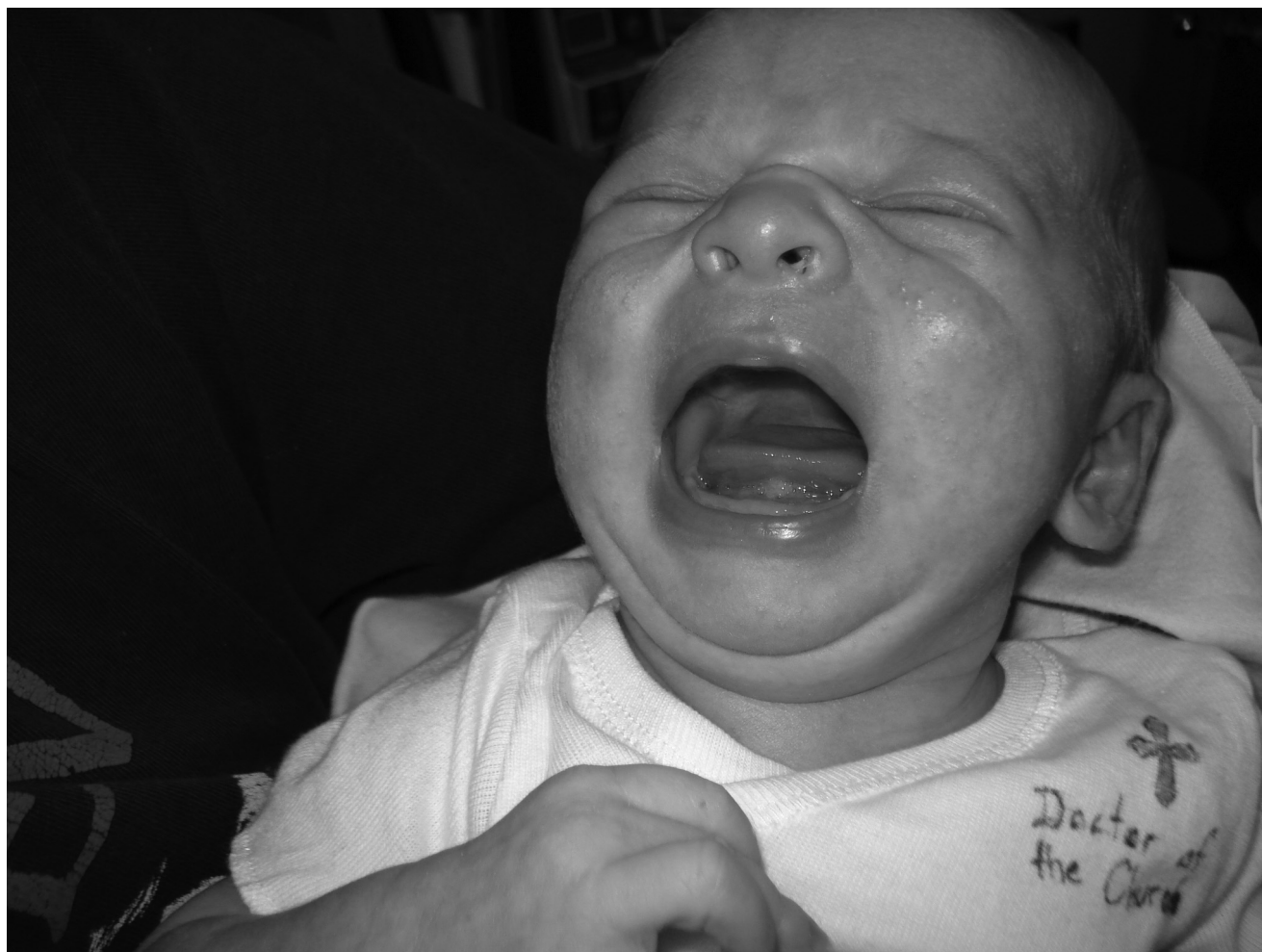
The Sign and Karl would appreciate the good people in AltaVista for its wonderful technology of the Fish of Confusion.



WWW.MAKE-A-BABY-CRY.ORG

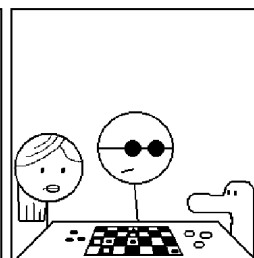
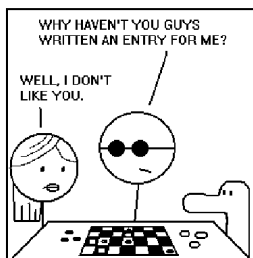
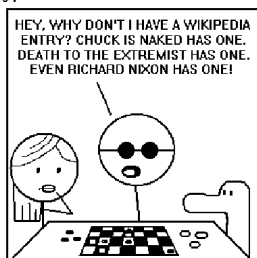


Hello. My name is Christine Fernsebner Eslao. I am not writing an article for *The Omen's* 15th Anniversary Extravaganza because I am very "busy" and I have a lot of "things" to do. When Gabriel McKee's 4-week-old son Anselm heard this news, it drove him to tears (fig. 1). I do not apologize for causing him this sadness.



(fig. 1) Anselm McKee, crying.

THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF SURLY BOY



By Jacob Chabot, F96

YOU'RE GOING TO DIE SOMEDAY

By MARK HUGO, F97

It's been nearly a decade since our last world-class horoscopes and I'm sure you're overflowing with questions. Will Cancer have cancer? Will Gemini be gay? Will everyone be going to Hell? Do you even know what I'm talking about?

Aries (March 21 – April 19)

You came out of Hampshire with a useless film degree and immediately descended into a crippling depression. Luckily for you, the Church of Scientology was there to pick up the pieces. Now you're editing creepy Tom Cruise cult videos. Cheer up, at least you're working in the business.

Taurus (April 20–May 20)

You got killed by the Cloverfield Monster and nobody cared. Kidding. Actually, you just threw up on yourself in the theater. Which is more sad?

Gemini (May 21z–June 21)

Turns out you're not gay, Gemini. We've said it repeatedly but it turns out we were wrong. Unfortunately, your addiction to Project Runway, America's Top Model and mimosas won't help convince anyone.

Cancer (June 22–July 22)

Sorry Cancer, you did have cancer. Turns out it wasn't that bad though. Treatment worked and your doing fine. Unfortunately, now you've got

Bird Flu. Relations with our avian friends doesn't seem like such a wise idea anymore, does it? Good luck with that you Big Bird sodomizing jerk.

Leo (July 23–August 22)

I don't know what you do for money but I do know that you spend most of your day looking at LOLCats, designing LOLCats and wondering why no one will talk to you about your cats.

Virgo (August 23–September 22)

Your milkshake brought all the boys to the yard. But no longer. Or ever again.

Libra (September 23–October 23)

As one of the most influential members of POAPS (Planet of the Apes Prevention Society) you could have suppressed the ape rebellion and the coming of a terrible age where apes evolved from man. You were to busy having a family. Now Charlton Heston hates you.

Scorpio (October 24–November 21)

Heath Ledger mistook you for a CVS pharmacist and when he asked about the potentially hazardous interactions of his various medications you said, "It'll be all good." Nice going fancy pants! And no, the Seinfeld reference doesn't make you any less of a douche.

Sagittarius (November 22–December 21)

Looks like you bet on the wrong horse for the primaries. Despite that he is in the middle of a comeback the Pee Wee Herman write-in campaign was premature.

Capricorn (December 22–January 19)

For years you thought you had Asperger Syndrome. Turns out you just don't have a sense of humor. But the real questions here is what the hell is a Capricorn? It looks like someone cut the bottom off a goat and stapled a jumbo shrimp in its place. Your sign is lame.

Aquarius (January 20–February 18)

The Age of Aquarius is either over or not yet begun—I can never remember. Aquarius, you're a dirty hippie and nothing is going to change that.

Pisces (February 19–March 20)

We finally figured out what's really causing global warming and it's you, Pisces. Don't ask about the details but here's a hint, put down the Taco Bell! Now that the icecaps have melted we've all got to decide who to back, Aquaman or Namor. How am I going to do that? I mean, Aquaman has a better pompadour but Namor is Marvel and that makes him cooler.



HAMPSHIRE PARENTS

Hampshire College is a great way for youngsters to obey the pointless demands of a broken social system while maintaining the self-delusion that they're exercising freedom. You might say that Hampshire is radically radical. After all, if you're going to jump through the unproductive hoop of a liberal arts education, it's nice to know you can enjoy a false sense of counter-culture coolness while doing so.

Indeed, where else but at Hampshire would kids swallow that tracking down your bored, disengaged committee members is a way to learn life skills—and not just proof that the school is a rip-off? As a Hampshire student, you've already mastered this sort of tortured reasoning, the kind of thought-sickness necessary to paint the hell-hole of Prescott into some sort of dream resort.

I'm here to tell you, these lessons will serve you well in the "real" world. After graduation, you can go on disguising the soul-crushing tedium of your fundamentally conventional lifestyle with the *accoutréments* of individuality—even to the next, inevitable stages of the grinding rat race—even to marriage and parenthood!

After all, you aren't marrying your other-gendered roommate

for tax and healthcare benefits. You'd never do anything so square as a "hetero-normative marriage." Instead, you'll have a celebration, a commemoration of the day that you out-maneuvered the status-quo. You'll have a barbeque. You'll exchange "promises of fidelity" while standing on a folding table in your parents' backyard.

And when you finally submit to the biological and social imperative to reproduce, it's not because you'll be unable to find any other justification for your sorry existence in your risk-adverse day-job or your solipsistic social life. No. Instead, you will contribute to over-population so you can add another socially-conscious crusader, another voice of justice, another little *good guy*, to the world of the enlightened.

That baby is going to be dressed up in the best *not-a-regular-baby* outfits that the world has to offer. That baby is going to have the most expensive switch-grass-pulp renewable diapers. That baby is going to use only the best bottles, made from real, hollowed-out human breasts. That baby is going to know that meat and milk will end civilization. That baby is going to have autism. Severe, debilitating autism.

I'm sorry to be the one to

break it to you. But look at the numbers. It's unavoidable. At this rate, by the time you graduate, for every one hundred children born, one hundred and four will have autism. Your baby is gonna be one of those bonus four autistic babies that spontaneously pop into existence. Your baby, which will have autism, will have violent, bangs-her-head-on-the-wall-all-day style autism.

Avoid vaccines. Avoid mercury. Avoid products from China. Keep up on the latest medical literature. Quit your job and engage in eye-contact exercises twenty-four hours a day. The knowledge that you did all these things will be comforting when your kid has autism.

Your baby is going to have autism because you sing "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes" with insufficient zest. Your baby is going to have autism because you have bad taste in home furnishings. Your baby is going to have autism because you can't possibly love it right. And now your kid has autism.

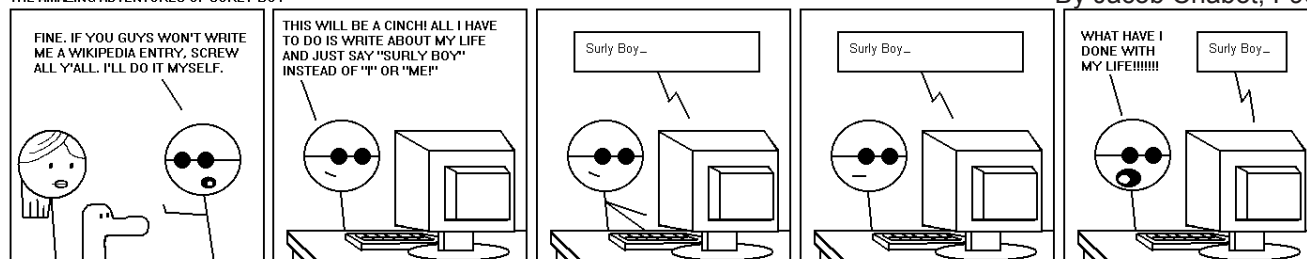
I know what you're thinking. You're thinking—"I can just leave the baby in a dumpster."

Well then.

Touché.



THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF SURLY BOY



By Jacob Chabot, F96

THE LAST OF THE FIRST

You and I may seem very different, but together we are part of a very special generation. Hampshire College opened somewhere around 1970, right? And those first students were somewhere around age twenty when they attended, right? Now, it's almost forty years later, which means that first class of Hampsters is pushing sixty. And, by the same logic, in another ten years, they'll be seventy, or maybe even eighty. Imagine. In twenty years, they might be as old as one hundred and forty!

Except, they won't be, because my dear reader, they will die first. They will die, and that means -- you and I will witness the die-off of the first class of Hampshire College. That is our special gift. To oversee that golden moment when this wooden puppet of a college finally becomes a real boy, when there's a class of its students now entirely on the other side, on the side of the ground where they put coffins. Not only will this finally bring the institution a meaningful endowment, it will foster a sense of

You're going to be addicted to heroin. A lot of people think they can avoid a heroin addiction simply by not buying or taking heroin, or by kicking those people who

sneak in the windows at night and try to forcefully inject them with heroin, but the reality is, in the adult world, you have to pay your own rent, you have to clean up your own common spaces, and you have to get illegal opiates into your bloodstream to stave off the living hell of withdrawal any-which-way you can, mutherfucker. And now. Now!! Noooooooooooooooooow-
wwwwwwwww.

Heroin's no big deal. Everyone on the outside, and a good half of you on the inside, are already addicted. Your parents may not have brought up the topic yet, but they're addicted. No, addiction is not the tragedy. The tragedy is, like most Hampshire alumni, you won't get addicted to the good heroin. The cool heroin. No, you're going to get addicted to CHEESE heroin. That's right. I'm not making this up. I've seen it time and again. The heroin you're going to be addicted to will be the heroine called Cheese. The heroin that proves, once and for all, that people on drugs should not be allowed to name things. Cheese.

Cheese--your drug of choice--is a weak, powdered form of black-tar heroin mixed with over-the-counter sleeping aids, like Tyenol P.M. You snort it. You get high for a couple hours. It's

about a dollar a pop. And here's the kicker: it's popular amongst NINE YEAR OLDS in Texas. You can buy this drug with LUNCH MONEY. And they DO.

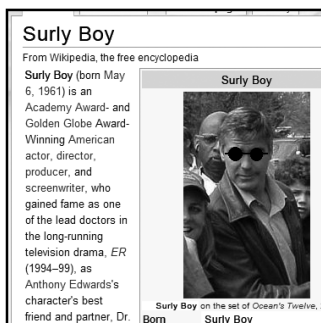
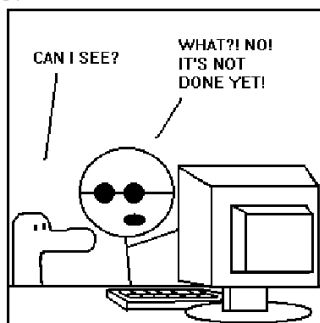
That's right, you're going to get addicted to heroin for kids. The "R" in your heroin is backward. You are going to get crippled, and ultimately killed, by a craving for something that prepubescent punks and princesses think is pretty awesome. Which makes you the Trix Bunny's fucked up sibling. Someday, you're going to have a really shitty afternoon, that afternoon when you can't find your dealer because she got her first period and wouldn't come out of the restroom.

Look at yourself. Look at that face. You're going to betray your friends, disappoint your family, squander your future, and get locked up in prison -- for using a drug that NINE YEAR OLDS are all excited about. Getting addicted to Cheese, going to prison for it--that's essentially the drug-world equivalent of stalking and raping Hanna Montana. Or the Pink Power Ranger. Which, in about six years, you will gladly do, if it gets you another hit of Cheese.

Just so you know.



THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF SURLY BOY



By Jacob Chabot, F96

YOU EST ABBY?

BY ABBY OHLHEISER, F03

This *Omen* article will be brought to you by the letter F. F, as any *Omen* staff member past or present knows, is for FUCK YOU. In my case, it's also for France. And fumeurs. Some may argue that most of the credit for this article goes to the pot of mulled wine that I made and imbibed by myself today, but that doesn't start with the letter F.

I hear rumors of *Omen* alums gathering together to make an anniversary issue. But I also hear that said *Omen* alums have KIDS IN TOW. So it's probably best that I'm not there at all. I haven't been away from Hampshire or *The Omen* long enough to see the point in procreation.

While I was editor, I felt more like the official *Omen* band-aid. I held shit together until a new staff could come in and start generating content. I didn't want to do it, but I also

didn't want to let *The Omen* die. I hated the idea of *The Climax* existing without us.

At its best, *The Omen* can keep a like-minded group of Hampshire students sane. It takes all our hate and reduces it into a manageable container, which is then diffused through the population at large so that everybody shares a little bit of the burden. But I got to see *The Omen* at its worst: me, in a room, sober, trying to make the page count divisible by 4. It's enough to make a grown man cry, and the only cock I have is the ceremonial one that all *Omen* editors possess.

I have no clue why I spent my Sophomore year keeping together a publication that seemed to have lost its audience on campus. Maybe it was out of spite. I'd like to think that was why. "Fuck you, Hampshire. You don't want *The Omen* any more? Well, *The Omen* loves you and it's

not ready to move on yet!" But I think it was really because I didn't want to be the person to let it die; I feared the wrath of all those procreating Brooklyn hipsters who spent their time at Hampshire filling pages at 2 am on Saturdays in the Pub Lab, which I bet still has that fucking weird smell. As if I'd be cutting off the only thing that kept them connected to Hampshire. And, given the fact that said alums are spending yet another of their Saturday nights putting together yet another issue of *The Omen*, I'd say I dodged a bullet.

I think the French guy frowning at me and mumbling something is trying to kick me out, so I guess I need to stop before I lose my wifi connection. May *The Omen* last for another 100 years, long after Hampshire goes down the tubes.

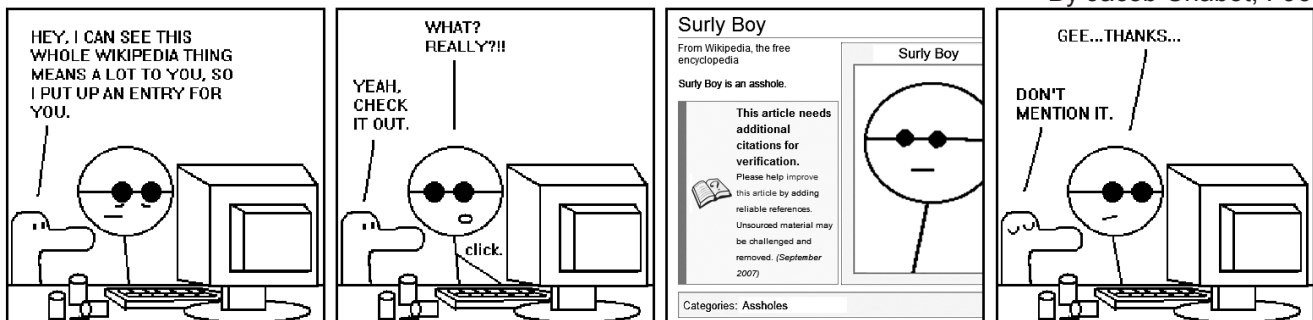


THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF SURLY BOY



By Jacob Chabot, F96

THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF SURLY BOY



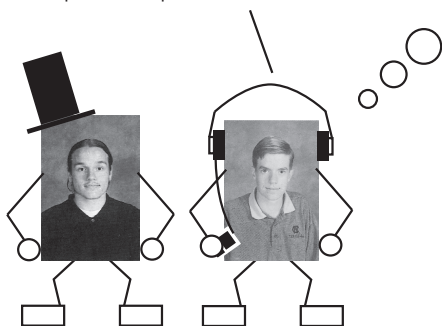
By Jacob Chabot, F96

THE ADVENTURES OF KARL AND SHAUN by Shaun Boyle and Karl Moore

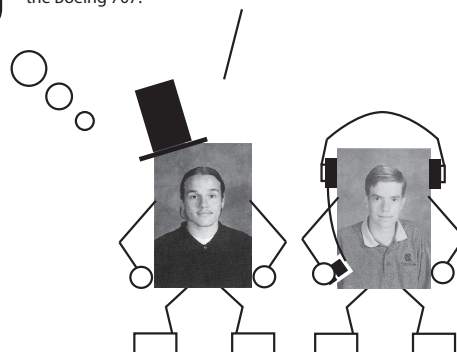
"The First and Last Episode"

In 1996, two high school classmates entered into an epic argument--can a Boeing B-52 Stratofortress safely execute a barrel roll? Today the argument will be decided....

"Karl, I just have a hard time believing that a B-52 can maintain the speed needed to enter into the maneuver and safely execute it. Even if it could, these demands would far exceed both the design and operational capabilities of the aircraft."

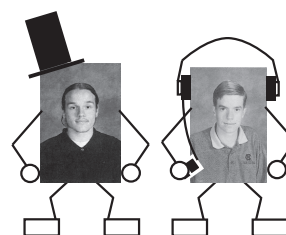
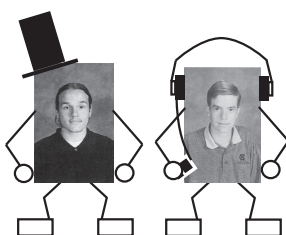
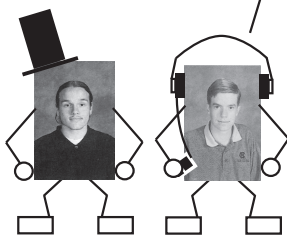


"Shaun, Shaun, Shaun. A barrel roll, when executed properly, is only a 1-G maneuver and places little to no stress on the structural skeleton of the aircraft. Also, Tex Johnston, lead test pilot during the design phase of the B52, has performed the maneuver in planes slightly smaller than the B52, most notably the Boeing 707."



Anyway, what you listen' on?

The new Feist.



THIS ONE'S OPTIMISTIC



SECTION MOPE!

There comes a time in the life of every Hampshire graduate when we finally realize that we're truly adults. It's usually when we wake up after that first long night on the street. It's usually when our parents have had enough, and when our friends, the ones that went straight into the workplace out of high school, when they kick us off their couches. That's usually when we proudly join the growing community of Hampshire students who live on the street. Or in our cars. Or in apartments that might as well be cars.

Not you, you say? You can't imagine hitting that noble milestone? Sooner or later, all of us find out, first hand, that our expensive liberal arts degree is printed on paper far too thin to serve as insulation. Can't see yourself ever getting there? Not with your can-do Hampshire spirit? Well, get used to using computers at the library. Too far away to plan for? Too remote a possibility? Especially with your independent spirit and finely honed talents at carving your own way? Join us at Santa Monica pier. It's warm here, and sometimes seagulls drop fish.

When you graduate, and gasoline is eleven dollars a gallon, and the Dow Jones has dipped well below 500 points, and China comes knocking, looking for paybacks on its loans—everything will be okay. Even if you become a ball-bearing in the corporate wheel that crushes

the underprivileged, you're going to do just fine. Even when staying afloat means throwing every heavy ethical standard overboard, you're still going to have many moments of simple happiness. Sometimes you get a free breakfast sandwich on the McDonald's monopoly. Sometimes a pretty girl takes off her underpants. Sometimes a handsome man isn't about to assault you.

In the end, everyone finds their way, and you're going to find yours. It just happens. It doesn't require any special ability to question power. You won't need to excel at active inquiry. All the world asks of you is that you keep getting up in the morning, and keep doing whatever the day demands. Get plenty of sleep, try to eat well, take the stairs instead of the elevator, even if it's the fifth floor. Try not to be in a hurry, try to be patient with everyone. Above all, make love your default position.

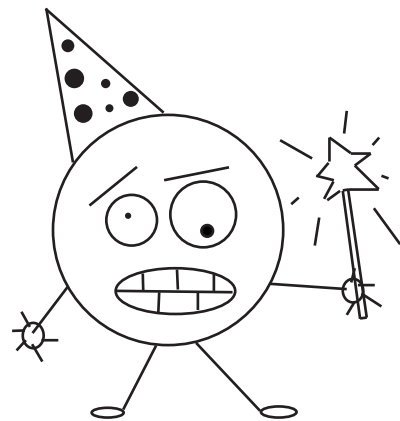
The world may end, but it was going to do that anyway. You can't do anything about it, and worry never improves tomorrow, it only harms today. So, take it easy. Enjoy the time you have. Learn meditation. Surrender to the universe. Observe every moment with compassion. Stop believing in God.

Yes, if you haven't already abandoned the fiction of a higher purpose, do so now. The sooner the better. It's stupid. Just stop it. There is no God. There is

no Heaven. There is no human soul. There is no purpose, no right, no wrong, no kindness, no cruelty. There are only particles and forces. There's only the illusion of a pattern that emerges from the chaos, and it's only the result of a faulty perspective. All appearances of meaning are an evolutionary adaptation, an inclination toward confirmational bias, meant to cope with the downsides of a mutationally enlarged brain, which was only beneficial for cooling purposes to begin with.

And so, you see, everything is going to be fine. Life may not always deal you exactly the hand of cards that you've been dreaming about, and working toward, but every hand's a winner. And every hand's a loser. And the best you can hope for, is to die in your sleep.

Goddamn it. I'm really trying to be optimistic. I really, really am.



This Article Goblin wants to be the Wizard after Benni.

jag är så



himla kul

PLUS ÇA CHANGE

My tenure writing for the *Omen* didn't last too long—about 3 semesters, and in that time I wrote mostly about Hampshire-related things. That ranged from a thoughtful, in-depth review of each Five College library (including ease of access, amenities, and study carrel quality) to a report on committee chair/member caps for faculty members to a chronicle of Hampshire urban legends. Yes—I'm a big dork. But I always figured—if you want music or movie reviews, you can find them elsewhere. In what other forum will you find someone earnestly discussing the need for more student reps to trustee committees?

Anyway, I figured that for my alumni article, I shouldn't break the trend. Given that I've been gone from the college for almost as long as I was there (a terrifying thought, to be sure), I've decided to do a comparison: what's changed, and what's stayed the same, since my time as a student. I've been back to visit and in touch with Hampshire people periodically, and I never had much of a problem basing my articles on a blend of unfounded rumor, anecdotal evidence, and personal bias, so I don't foresee a problem with discussing Hampshire's

current state. And then all of you young whippersnappers get to find out what you missed out on (and what you should be glad you missed out on) approximately 4-8 years ago. It will also include gratuitous Beth Day references, because none of my *Omen* articles are truly complete without reference to Beth Day.

The Dean of Students Office

What's changed: Mike Ford.

The new Dean of Students, whoever they are, might possibly be as fair-minded as Mike Ford was. They might well be more punctual than Mike Ford was. But only Mike Ford says, "Who the hell knows what the Dean of Students does, anyway? I sure don't." Does the new Dean of Students deliver a discourse on the meaning of the phrase "knockin' boots" after inviting Renee Freedman to "hook up" with him later? My heart (and Beth Day's heart) mourn for the departure of Mike Ford, and the loss of a whole generation of Hampshire students, who will never hear him declare, "Fuck that!"

What hasn't changed: Renee Freedman.

Renee, and Renee's knitting circle. If I lived within any kind of commuting distance of

Hampshire College, I would come back for Renee's knitting circle every week, and not just for the chocolate-chip sour cream cake from Atkins. I would come for the latest Hampshire gossip courtesy of Renee and the choicest house interns, stories about Hampshire past from Renee's time as a student, and the chance to hear Renee tutor her latest student: "Knitting is just loops through loops." I exclusively crocheted during my attendance, but Renee—a tolerant, open-minded woman—always permitted this. I sleep every night with the blanket I made during my time with Renee.

The President's Office

What's changed: Greg to Ralph.

Oh, Greg Prince—with your combover, and your sports jackets, and your inexplicable enthusiasm for ideas like turning the campus into a series of corporate-sponsored sculpture gardens, and your golly-gee-willikers ability to spin any conflict at Hampshire as an inspiring commentary on "student participation". Wherever you are now, I hope it's someplace where your boundless optimism is always justified, and there are many

horses for your wife. Your office now belongs to Ralph, with his snazzy fashion sense and his husband who... funny, also loves horses. Hmmm. Just let him know not to "borrow" any from the Farm Center, will you?

What hasn't changed: The nature of the presidency.

Long before I graduated, I made my peace with the idea that the president's job was really about raising money—thus the corporate sculpture gardens (...still—really?) Greg's job, and now Ralph's, is mostly to keep the dollars coming in. However, what I was disappointed by in the presidential changeover was how very little difference there seemed to be; I wrote to friends that we were getting "Greg II: The Gay Greg". I still see a real disconnect between bold rhetoric about the future of Hampshire College, and the actual existence of Hampshire College today. You can write *Making of a College* vols. 2.1-4.8, but it's like laying out a marathon route for someone with a broken leg. There's some serious dysfunction at Hampshire, and until it's addressed, every grand plan is going to stumble and fall. Obviously a large cash infusion would take care of many problems (doesn't it always) but I don't see Ralph's Latin-riddled manifestos bringing in the dollars from alumni. So unless they're some kind of multimillion-dollar grant application, I think our head fund raiser would do well to focus on the actual experiences of students at the college, who will eventually become alumni,

and then will decide whether or not to give money based on how screwed over they felt by the college where they attended.

The School of Natural Science

What's changed: Some names and faces.

Students have graduated, professors have departed and retired, staff has moved on. Change is the only constant, my friends.

What hasn't changed: The innate greatness of NS.

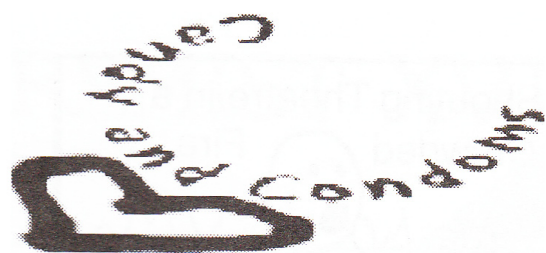
My one alumni fund contribution to date has been not because of anything that Ralph has written... it hasn't been because of my wonderful experiences with Hampshire fabulous dorms, or my fond memories of the community, or my longing to taste Saga food just one more time. It hasn't even been because of *The Omen*. After three years of institutional advancement's plaintive missives I finally caved: I gave those persistent fuckers 10 bucks, and I checked that I wanted it to go to my favorite people: Natural Science. Natural Science embodies all that is good and pure about Hampshire College. Bringing students and faculty together in an atmosphere of egalitarian openness, encouraging independent work and original research, and providing free lunch every week at school meeting... it's almost like they remember what Hampshire was originally supposed to be about, and are committed to that vision. It's—well, it's sweet.

Debates on racism

What's changed: Um... different people are failing to sign their names to anonymous manifestoes?

What hasn't changed: Yeah, so, nothing. Allow me to digress here for a moment, based on a gmail chat I had with Beth Day earlier today. In my third and fourth years at Hampshire, there was a debate on an article that ran in *The Omen*. It started off as more of a debate about sexism, but like everything, it quickly spiraled out to encompass every other -ism out there. The whole process culminated in an all-community meeting. At the end of that meeting, something unusual—something unique to my entire time at Hampshire—occurred. Towards the end—after everyone had gotten angry and made their speeches and talked and listened and talked, some of the key players from all sides gathered together on one side of the Main Lecture Hall, and we talked. And just for a fleeting few minutes towards the end, I felt like some of the most dedicated people there were able to come together and agree on some key issues. We all agreed that the situation at Hampshire was so fucked up—that there were very serious problems—and that we never got a chance to talk, to air grievances and ask the stupid questions and figure out what to do next. For a few moments, we all agreed, we all understood each other, and

continued on page 29



LAST MAN STANDING

We're all familiar with the game of last man standing, am I right?

The name is fairly self-explanatory. Although if you find yourself where Laura is now—Lemmings Bar on a Saturday night, post White Sox/Mets, you might find yourself a bit too far removed from the concept of standing to really appreciate a fine analogy. (Or a shitty analogy. Fuck off.)

Laura is 3 sheets, nay 10 sheets no, forget sheets, whole fucking reams to the wind right now. But thanks to the only prudent decision she'll make all night (leaving the heels at home), she's winning Last Man Standing. Which has something of a different meaning in a bar than it does in a Kurosawa remake. It's a time honored little farce which plays out like a poker/go fish hybrid where each player is dealt essentially the same hand at the beginning of every game, but you may or may not choose to play with the same players on any given night and how many cards you can give/take is somewhat dependent on how many tequila shots you can put down.

Laura can put down plenty, and I think we all know she's the type who's looking for different players on a pretty regular basis.

You're in a bar. And this is Saturday, so everyone

who's not already there with someone is looking for someone. So do you partner up go home early? Or do you wait for a better fish? What if you wait too long? When do you know it's too late? When do you give up and salvage what's left of your dignity and your pocket book?

Laura is dangerously close to winning Last Man Standing and so losing the Saturday Night Hookup. So she squares her shoulders, thrusts out her cleavage, and walks up to the dude ordering Glenlivet who beat her here.

"So..." she bites her lip in what could pass for fetching in some alternate universe. "I have a confession."

Blank stare here.

"I'm cheering for the Mets."

In case you obnoxious Yankees aren't aware, this is sacrilege.

"Any chance I could buy you another and bribe your forgiveness?"

This the man understands. More liquor. And the potential of a girl with a serious oral fixation.

"I'm Jeremy." Does it matter?

An hour later and she finds herself pressed against the wall at the Damen El stop, an eager hand slipping underneath her Amy Winehouse t-shirt. He kisses like a girl. Full lips and more lip than tongue let alone teeth

and she's surprised there isn't a hint of cherry lipgloss. And he's cradling her breast when she'd really appreciate it if he gave her nipple a good pinch and woke her up a bit. Bored, and not wanting to be rude, she shifts her hips forward, grabbing his ass and pulling him against her. Not hard enough for her liking, she inserts her hand between them, and (how do men wear their pants so loose without a belt?) down the rabbit hole as it were.

He moans and whimpers and breathes in a way that makes her worry he's asthmatic. "Don't you want to wait until we get to my apartment baby? My roommates will be asleep, it's only in Logan Square."

That means far away. Even though it's March it's all of 38 degrees outside and the only thing that's keeping her from calling a cab is the heat lamps above her and poverty.

She sits him down on the somehow magically hygienically clean bench and kneels in front of him, undoing his Dockers. "That's a no."

She wants a glass of water, her mouth isn't wet enough, but she puts her right hand on his shaft and begins to slowly stroke him as she tongues his balls. She laves, she sucks, she nuzzles, and then her

continued on next page

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mouth and fingers are enveloping his whole cock. She moves to the head, licking the ridge underneath, quickening the pace of her hands.

She likes the graduation of his noise repertoire from tiny kicked puppy to wolf on the prairie and before she knows it there's more than a little bit of

salty goo dripping out the left side of her mouth.

She smiles, sits back on her heels, and then leans forward to kiss him. He moves his mouth aside. She frowns. Tries again. He pulls back.

"I have a spare toothbrush at my house."

In the distance, she can see the light of the train, but it's

going in the wrong direction. Towards her house. No wait, the right direction.

"Have a good night Jeremy."

She stands up and walks away, regretting a lack of heels or even spurs. She doesn't have anything to clack angrily on the wooden platform.



continued from "Plus Ça Change" page 27

we realized that we agreed on so many more issues than we disagreed on.

And then we all went off to dinner, and from there to our respective mods and classes and lives, never to meet again. And people just fell back into their old positions and hardened there, and the administration continued not to care.

Having orientation leaders and interns get anti-oppression trainings—that's bullshit. Are we saying that they are then qualified to train other people? I know that as an orientation leader, playing games where we took one step forward for each of our privileges did not exactly train me to guide my group of orientees through negotiating 500 years of oppression on American soil and its repercussions on their personal and academic experiences for the next four years. Mostly, I was just hoping they'd actually be willing to sit with us for meals. If Hampshire is really serious about addressing racism, then instead of throwing a day or two of training at student workers and hoping it will

somehow spread via osmosis, transforming us into a magical anti-racist campus, we will have sustained discussions led by experienced trainers where people find common ground, work on differences, and make change.

And then maybe more alums will give you money, Ralph.

My feelings about Hampshire

What's changed: The level of bitterness I feel about certain things.

As should be evidenced, I can still get bitter about certain things Hampshire-related, although usually only when I talk (or write) long enough to dredge up enough long-buried ire. My day-to-day level of bitterness has, of course, mellowed and softened to a gentle, nostalgic resentment.

What hasn't changed: The people I met at Hampshire.

I still find myself hanging out with my Hampshire peeps, and finding myself happiest when I'm with them. I've made wonderful, amazing friends from all stages of my life, but in post-college life you tend to make one friend here, one

friend there. Only with my Hampshire friends can we all just chill together, and of course, we never run out of things to talk about. Because there's always one more story to tell about something fucked up that happened at Hampshire.

I have one more thing to share. The last night that I was working on the final draft of my Div III, holed up in the computer lab on the third floor of the library with other desperate finishers, Amy Simpson came in and whispered to me, "I finished! Tonight! It's done!"

"Congratulations!" I whispered back. She grinned and held open her backpack; I saw two bottles inside.

"Come on!" she whispered, and we took ourselves from the hushed temple of Div III devotion, into the stacks by the international studies office. And there, amongst the books, we opened our beers and clinked them in honor of our Div III completion and our futures. It's one of my favorite memories from Hampshire, and I just wanted to share it with all of you.



Beth sez grr!!



(by Ms.
Beth Day)

gown-up is actually pretty neat:

I get paid to play in the mud!



Because of this, I actually have money now, so I can buy essentials:



Booze! Cheese! Comic bodys!

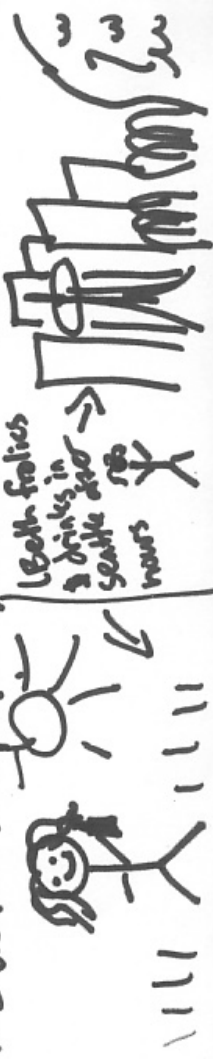
Hello Omen, it has been a long time. I live in Seattle now, which is the awesomest place in our dumbass country. I am currently drinking tequila and organic pink lemonade out of a mason jar. Being

gown-up is actually pretty neat:

→ I also live in sin with my boyfriend in a tiny house, where I can play Rock Band loud drunk and nekkid!



Best of all, I come home from work and it's done! No papers, homework, etc!



Unfortunately there are other things that are not so awesome about being grown-up:

(Rock Band is LONELY!!)



Waking up early in the morning (unless you are Matthew, work for Google, and can get to work @ 10 am - EVEN MORE BULLSHIT!)



Paying back all those loans you took to go to Hampshire



Not as much free time for fun things.



LITTLE KNOWN HAMPSHIRE ALUMS

By JACOB CHABOT, F96

I'm sure if you've participated in the regular Phone-A-Thon at Hampshire, somewhere deep in the back of your mind you hope that you'll be the one who gets to call one of the more famous Alums to beg for pittances. Here are some Hampshire Alums that you might not know about:

The Guy Who Majored in Foosball—Sure, everyone knows about Hampshire Summer-Camp Poster Child, John Dwork, who graduated with a concentration in Frisbee. But, how many of you are aware of Gerald Bumblekin, who concentrated in Foosball? Not many, I'm sure. You should go check out his Div III entitled "Little Men Shuffle Side To Side,

But Never Advancing." Seriously, go check it out. I'll wait.

That Dog Who Lived In Enfield For Four Years—A german shepherd/collie mix named Dudley somehow received a degree. Dudley's owner did not. When Dudley attended graduation and walked up to receive his diploma, the Administration quickly realized that there must have been some sort of clerical error, but they were too embarrassed to rectify it. Plus, there's always the chance that this dog might get a credit card someday.

Mel Gibson—Mel Gibson spent about an hour-and-a-half on campus one sunny spring afternoon as his daughter took a tour.

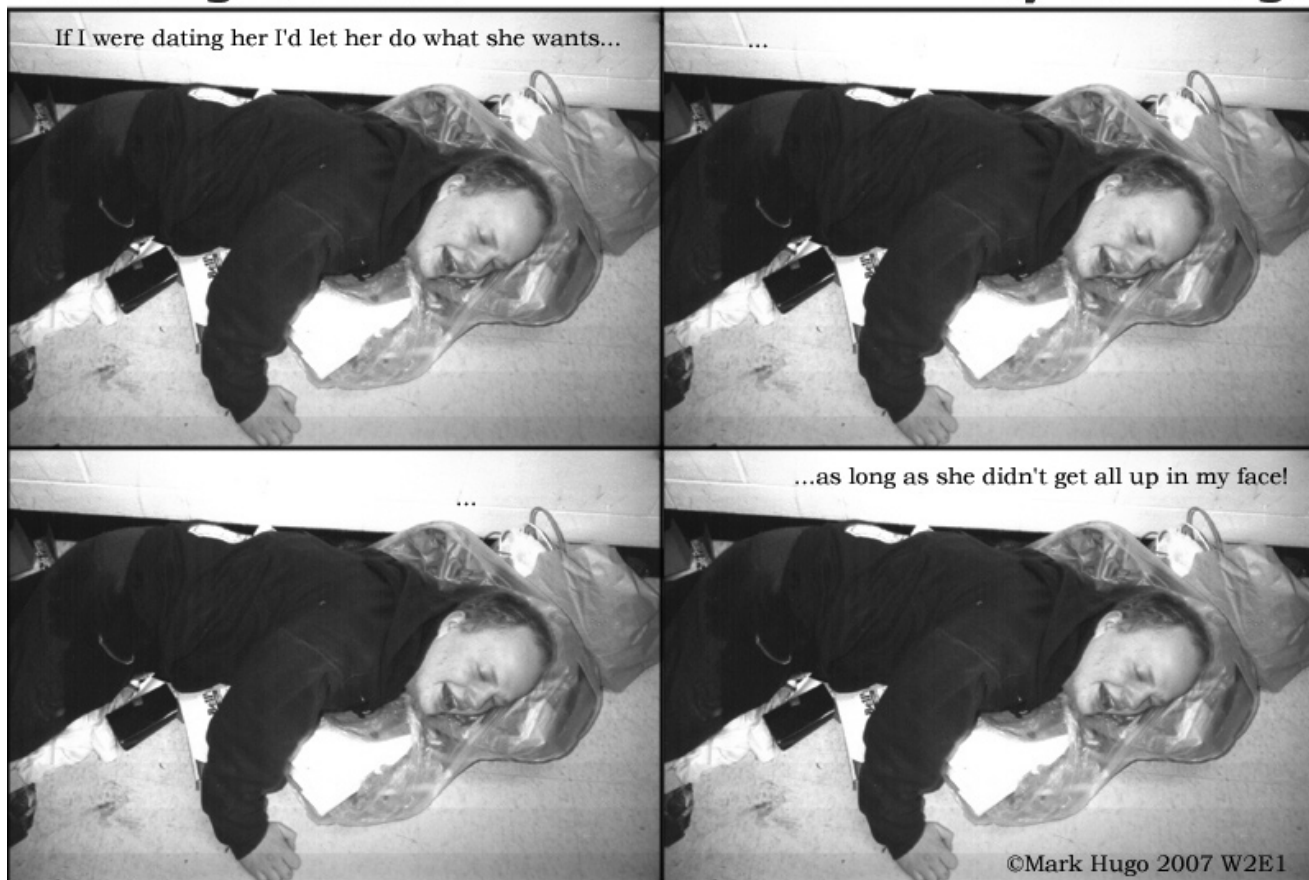
Thusly, he is now considered an Alum. Mel Gibson is a famous star of the silver screen and his many credits include *Tickled Pink*, *Attack Force Z*, and *Mrs. Soffel*.

John Montagu, 4th Earl of Sandwich—English Nobleman John Montagu, the Fourth Earl of Sandwich is known for inventing the sandwich due to his gambling problem. He (and his roommate, The Earl of Manwich) also frequently set off the fire alarms many times with their culinary experiments to the ire of their dorm mates. John Montagu graduated with a degree in Music Theory.



Wade-ing To Exhale

by mark hugo



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